

Hiking Trails in Tennessee

Middle Creek, Sawmill, Charit Creek and Twin Arches

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big South Fork National River and
Recreation Area
Oneida, TN



Needle Arch



Charit Creek Lodge

The west side of the park has hiking trails featuring creeks, rockshelters, arches and a backcountry lodge.

Middle Creek Trailhead

From the Bandy Creek Visitor Center, turn right and drive 1.6 miles to a stop sign. Turn right onto TN 297W and drive 10 miles. At the stop sign, turn right onto TN 154N and drive 1.8 miles. Turn right on a gravel road, Divide Road. The Middle Creek Trailhead is located 0.7 mile on your right.

Middle Creek Loop Trail 3.5 mile loop – Easy/Moderate

Carved into sandstone bluffs by weathering and erosion, rock shelters abound on the moderate 3.5 mile loop. An easy 0.9 mile Connector Trail joins Middle Creek Loop and Slave Falls Loop. At the junction, you can turn right on the Slave Falls Loop to access Laurel Fork Creek Trail in 1 mile.

Sawmill Trailhead

Follow the directions above to Divide Road. Drive past Middle creek Trailhead. In 0.3 mile turn right on Fork Ridge Road. Continue 2.2 miles to the trailhead.

Slave Falls Loop Trail 3.2 mile loop – Easy/Moderate

Intermittent streams cut through rock very slowly, even in geological time. The result is a tall but narrow hanging waterfall.

From Sawmill Trailhead, you can reach the waterfall in 1.2 miles. Past the 0.2 mile spur leading to the waterfall, a 2.5 mile Connector Trail winds downhill past **Needle Arch** and joins the Twin Arches Trail near Jake's Place. Slave Falls Loop also features a 90 feet wide, 75 feet deep Indian Rock House. Near the rock house is the beginning of the beautiful 13-mile Laurel Fork Creek Trail that highlights approximately 30 creek crossings before connecting to the John Muir Trail near Station Camp Creek.

Charit Creek Trailhead

Follow the directions above to Sawmill Trailhead. Continue past the trailhead to the end of Fork Ridge. Use caution as this section of road serves as a multi-use trail, open to horses and wagons.

Charit Creek Hiking Trail 0.8 mile one way – Difficult

This steep 0.8 mile trail is the shortest way into Charit Creek Lodge. Entering the forest from the parking area, you will descend a wooden staircase to the base of a bluff. The trail begins winding its way down the steep hillside via switchbacks. Cross the swinging bridge over Station Camp Creek and turn right on the gravelled road leading to the lodge.

Twin Arches Trailhead

After turning off TN 154N, remain on Divide road, following the Twin Arches signs for 4 miles. Turn right on the 2-mile Twin Arches Road and drive to the parking area.

Twin Arches Loop Trail 5.5 mile loop - Difficult

The **Upper Loop** trail descends steep staircases to reach the base of the arches in 0.7 mile. The trail is easier if you go across

the top of the North Arch and down the stairs between the two arches. A sign at the North Arch will direct you back to the parking area. The North and South Arches began as eroding “windows” in the narrow sandstone ridge and are so massive that both cannot be seen from one location. From the South Arch, the 4.1 mile **Lower Loop** descends to Charit Creek Lodge, passes the trail to Slave Falls, travels below high bluffs and finishes at the North Arch.